

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MARCH 2, 2010

ATTENDANCE: Calvin Burwell, Chairman; Commissioners: Frank Borres,
Nandi Cummings, Robert Halstead, Jasmin Richards

STAFF: William Minor, Land Use Director

Call to Order

Commissioner Burwell called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and stated that the above Commissioners were present.

A. Public Hearing

- 1. Certificate of Appropriateness:** Application #2010 – 01 by Elouise Epstein for a certificate of appropriateness for construction of a new handicap ramp at rear of building, addition of a new roof to existing rear staircase, changing outside entry door and small window and replace with a fire egress casement window at 468 Clinton Avenue in the Stratfield Historic District.

Commissioner Burwell reviewed the procedure for conducting the application hearing, and asked those who planned to speak to state their name, credentials or affiliation to the application, and to limit comments only as relevant to the application as listed. He added that documents, photographs, or renderings presented would be retained for the record.

Mr. Scott Mason, of Mason Brothers Builders, LLC, introduced himself as the contractor for the project representing the applicant and stated the reason for the application was to comply with building codes to provide handicap access to the building. Commissioner Burwell asked Mr. Mason to give the Commission a walk-through of the details in support of the application, and he submitted a packet with photographs of the house from different sides of the property and highlighted areas where the staircase would be built. Commissioner Burwell asked if this was a commercial property and Mr. Mason replied that there are offices and in order to move up to the second floor a staircase was required. He added that In November a building inspector showed up and informed the owner that zoning permits were required, which he was able to navigate through the zoning process and the Zoning Board informed them that approval from the Historical District was then required.

Commissioner Burwell asked the applicant to review each area of the application starting with the ramp, staircase, window, doors, railing, and roof, and to present the details to the Commissioners.

Mr. Mason stated that it was their intention to comply with building codes and to duplicate what is there now relative to materials. Regarding the ramp, the space is currently taken up by the space of two cars parked, so the area will be much better utilized than it is now, and they are awaiting approval from the Housing Authority for the ramp permit. Commissioner Burwell asked what types of materials were planned, and Mr. Mason responded pressure treated or composite materials because it is the most lasting and looks nice once it weathers. Mr. Borres asked if approval is needed for changes to the back door and windows, and Commissioner Cummings asked about the view of the back of the house. Commissioner Burwell replied that it is only in their purview where areas are visible from the street, which is open entirely for interpretation.

Mr. Mason clarified that the door needs to be widened four inches over and the plan calls for changing the windows to accommodate the new door. He added that he will use pressure treated lumber with a harder grain which is optimal but it does not hold the stain until it weathers for approximately six months. Commissioner Burwell asked about the treatment of the storm door, and Mr. Mason replied that he will duplicate the existing double hung with windows on either side to compensate for the six over one original.

Commissioner asked about the staircase in the back and commented that based on the photographs it looked like the shingles were reddish brown asphalt and he would like to preserve the look and elements of the soffit. Mr. Mason replied that the shingles would be over the staircase and would be the same as the house shingles, to comply with codes and replicate the flow and consistency with the house.

Commissioner Burwell asked why the door would be taken out, and Mr. Mason replied that it is the only way to put in the handicap access. He added that he would reframe the door and use grooved texture shingles and he would try to save and reuse the shingles where possible. Commissioner Burwell added that the shingles appear to be barn shakes, and it was important to match the varying widths and pattern. He asked about the step and Mr. Mason stated that he would be removed to comply with safety codes.

Commissioner Burwell asked about the windows and the options for casement styles, and Mr. Mason replied that he would use vinyl replacement windows, most likely a Marvin style with six divisions over. He added that this type is more durable because wood swells and water sometimes penetrates the casement.

Commissioner Burwell asked the members what else was important as all exterior elements are relevant, and Mr. Mason replied that the back of the house is really driven by building codes because of the staircase, which is required to be covered. Commissioner Borres asked about the railing and if any thoughts were given to the original balusters, and Commissioner Burwell replied that metal

railings is best for elderly as it is more sturdy and easier to grip on to. He added that it is in not their prerogative to push for this as much as it is their purview to critique the character of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Burwell then asked if there was anyone present in favor of the application. Hearing none, he then asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak against the application. Hearing none, he then closed the public hearing on Application #2010 – 01.

New Business – Application Review

Application #2010 –01 by Eloise Epstein – 468 Clinton Avenue

Commissioner Burwell stated that he recommended the applicant be approved with the following conditions relative to materials for the work as listed in the application.

1. Use wood materials rather than vinyl and fiberglass with the materials, which would mean using the Marvin window and casement.
2. Replace shingles with the hexagon-angular pattern to simulate the same effect of the siding and shingles on the side of the house, with any gap be integrated and filled.

Commissioner Borres added that since the roof brings attention to the windows the replacement one should be in scale with the other two windows in the building.

**** COMMISSIONER HALSTEAD MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION # 2009-10 BY ELOUISE EPSTEIN FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW HANDICAP RAMP AT REAR OF BUILDING, ADDITION OF A NEW ROOF TO EXISTING REAR STAIRCASE, CHANGING OUTSIDE ENTRY DOOR AND SMALL WINDOW AND REPLACE WITH A FIRE EGRESS CASEMENT WINDOW AT 468 CLINTON AVENUE IN THE STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT. WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. THE USE OF WOOD MATERIALS ARE REQUIRED, PREFERABLY THE MARVIN MANUFACTURED WINDOW AND CASEMENT.**
- 2. REPLACEMENT WINDOW IS TO BE SIZED IN SCALE WITH THE OTHER TWO WINDOWS IN THE BULDING AND DESIGNED TO RESEMBLE THE FRENCH LATTICE STYLE OF OTHER WINDOWS WITH TRUE DIVISION GRILLE, TO BE PAINTED ON EXTERIOR.**

3. **REPLACE SHINGLES WITH THE HEXAGON-ANGULAR PATTERN TO SIMULATE THE SAME EFFECT OF THE SIDING AND SHINGLES ON THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE, WITH ANY GAP TO BE INTEGRATED AND FILLED, MORTAR FOUNDATION TO RESEMBLE EXISTING.**
4. **THE LINE ALONG THE SHINGLES WILL PURGE NEXT TO THE DOORWAY AT THE SAME LEVEL AS THE REST OF THE SIDING.**

**** COMMISSIONER CARTER SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Old Business

Community Education

Commissioner Burwell asked for an update on the proposed mailing of an information pamphlet on the historic district guidelines for homeowners.

Commissioner Cummings stated that she was able to obtain a list of names of new buyers and property owners from MLS listings of the past two years and will have by the end of the week. She added that this list can be used to create a mailing list for a targeted mailing of a flyer or brochure. Commissioner Burwell asked if the list was available electronically, and Mr. Minor replied that it does exist somewhere, but was not able to determine the file location. Commissioner Borres asked if there were interns available to input the list into an excel-type of data base, and Mr. Minor replied no. Commissioner Burwell asked if Mr. Minor would have his office do the fulfillment of mailing the pamphlet, and he replied, yes.

Other Business

Commissioner Burwell mentioned an item that was on the agenda for next weeks Planning & Zoning Board of Appeals meeting that would be of high interest to the Commission. He stated that there is a proposal to approve a Group Home in the Historic District located at 783 Clinton Avenue at the intersection of North Street. He added that although it is an indirect area of purview, it is something that the Commission can take a position of non-support and submit a letter at next week's meeting.

Commissioner Borres stated that he would be attending the meeting as a Board Member and would not be able to read the letter from the Commissioners, as that would be a conflict for him. Commissioner Halstead agreed to prepare a rough

draft opinion letter and e-mail it to the Commissioners for them to review, provide input and then make corrections prior to next Monday. Commissioner Burwell asked Mr. Minor if the Commission had letterhead, and he replied no, but he could have the letter run off on the City's Departmental letterhead for them.

Commissioner Burwell stated that due to a schedule conflict he would be unable to attend the meeting, and Commissioner Cummings said she could attend and read the letter representing the Commission.

C. Minutes of November 9, 2009

Commissioner Burwell commented that the minutes were very well done and captured the items that were discussed at the November meeting. Ms. Cummings noted a few minor typos where a random period was listed on page 1, paragraph 3 and page 2, paragraph 1.

- ** COMMISSIONER CARTER MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 9, 2009 WITH CORRECTIONS AS NOTED.**
- ** COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

D. Adjournment

- ** COMMISSIONER HALSTEAD MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services